



**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Regional Director
[Tweet of the Week](#)**

Items of Greatest Interest for August 15-19, 2016:

1. [Zika Updates](#)
2. [Medicare Part D Prescriber Payment Data Release](#)
3. [CMS examining inappropriate steering of Medicare- & Medicaid-eligible consumers into Marketplace Plans](#)
4. [EPA Region IX releases materials from vector-borne diseases workshop](#)
5. [“Smoking Cessation for Pregnancy and Beyond” Continuing Education Hub](#)

Item 1: Zika Updates

Stay up to date with all the latest information and news about Zika by following CDC on [Twitter \(@cdc\)](#), visiting their [Zika-dedicated website](#), and monitoring the [What's New](#) section.

Here are a selection of updates from this past week:

- [ICYMI: Surgeon General Murthy urges Puerto Rico to step up fight against Zika](#)
- [HHS declares a public health emergency in Puerto Rico in response to Zika outbreak](#)
- [CDC Travel Advisory: Additional area of active Zika transmission in Miami Beach](#)
- [New Hub: Resources for Parents and Families of Newborns Affected by Zika](#)

Understanding Zika:

As of August 17, 2016, 2,246 cases of Zika have been reported to CDC in the continental United States and Hawaii; 14 were the result of local spread by mosquitoes. These cases include 22 believed to be the result of sexual transmission and one that was the result of a laboratory exposure. The first interstate transmission from the Wynwood (Miami) area occurred this week.

We continue to learn about Zika virus, and we are working hard to find out more about these cases. Here is what we do know:

- Many people infected with Zika virus – up to 80 percent by some reports – won't have symptoms or will only have mild symptoms.
- Zika is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito (*Ae. aegypti* and *Ae. albopictus*). [Areas of Region IX are within the estimated range of where these mosquitoes may travel.](#)
- A pregnant woman can pass Zika virus to her fetus during pregnancy or during birth, so testing in the first two trimesters is advised.
- Zika virus infection can cause microcephaly and other severe fetal brain defects, and is associated with other adverse pregnancy outcomes. 2 such cases occurred in Los Angeles this week.
- A person who is infected with Zika virus can pass it to sex partners.
- The link between [Zika and Guillian-Barre Syndrome](#) is under investigation.

Resources & Preparedness:

- [Contraceptive Use Among Nonpregnant and Postpartum Women in the Context of Zika Preparedness - United States](#)
- [Contraception to Prevent Unintended Pregnancy during the Zika Virus Outbreak](#)
- [Update: Women & Their Partners](#)
- [Zika is in Your Area: What to Do](#)
- [Zika Community Action Response Toolkit](#)
- [Updated: CDC Interim Zika Response Plan \[PDF\]](#)

Continue to spread with this week's social media campaign:

“Bite back against mosquitoes!”

[Learn more](#) about mosquitoes and how to protect yourself.

This week's campaign is in support of World Mosquito Day on August 20.

Download the CDC Zika Widget for your website:

- English: <http://www.cdc.gov/widgets/zika/index.html>
- Spanish: <http://www.cdc.gov/widgets/zikaspanish/index.html>

Sample social media to help spread the word:

Facebook

- Do you know what the deadliest animal in the world is? The mosquito! Millions of people each year are infected with viruses like malaria, dengue, chikungunya, and Zika after being bitten by a mosquito. Protect yourself by wearing repellent!
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/prevent-mosquito-bites.html>

- This Saturday is World Mosquito Day! There are more than 2,500 species of mosquitoes around the world that can carry viruses. Do your part to help control mosquitoes in and around your home and community.
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/controlling-mosquitoes-at-home.html>

Twitter

- Did you know there are more than 2,500 species of mosquitoes around the world?
- Millions of people each year are infected with viruses after being bitten by a mosquito. Protect yourself by wearing repellent! <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/prevent-mosquito-bites.html>
- This Saturday is World Mosquito Day! How do you prevent mosquito bites?
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/prevent-mosquito-bites.html>

Item 2: Medicare Part D Prescriber Payment Data Release

“With this data release, patients, researchers and providers can access valuable information about the Medicare prescription drug program,” said Niall Brennan, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Chief Data Officer. “[Thursday’s] release joins a series of actions the Administration is taking to improve transparency around government data, including the cost of prescription drugs.” Read more about the release and access the data set [here](#).

Item 3: CMS Examining Inappropriate Steering of Medicare- or Medicaid-Eligible Consumers into Marketplace Plans

CMS has issued a request for information seeking public comment on concerns that some health care providers and provider-affiliated organizations may be steering people eligible for, or receiving, Medicare and/or Medicaid benefits into Affordable Care Act-compliant individual market plans, including Health Insurance Marketplace plans, for the purpose of obtaining higher reimbursement rates. Read up on the issue and how to submit testimony [here](#).

Item 4: EPA Region IX Releases Materials from Vector-Borne Diseases Workshop

On Monday, August 8th, EPA hosted a workshop as a part of their Regional Tribal Operations Committee meeting on vector-borne diseases such as Zika and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. The focus of the day-long seminar was on understanding these diseases and developing strategies to fight the contagion. You can find the presentation slide deck [here](#).

Item 5: Smoking Cessation for Pregnancy & Beyond

[“Smoking Cessation for Pregnancy & Beyond: A Virtual Clinic”](#) is an interactive Web-based program designed for health care professionals to hone their skills in assisting pregnant women to quit smoking. Up to 5.25 hours of continuing education credits can be earned by completing the practicum that was developed by the Interactive Media Laboratory, Dartmouth Medical School in collaboration with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is now available free thanks to a recent CDC award.